

National Academy of Public Administration

Study Summary

USDA Farm Production and Conservation Business Center

Identifying a Path for Success and Advancing Change Management Review of the Structure of Business and Enterprise Services



Project Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Production and Conservation Business Center (FPAC-BC) provides services to employees and customers across the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Risk Management Agency (RMA). The services provided by the FPAC-BC were designed to improve operations and efficiencies within USDA and bolster support for America's farmers, ranchers, and foresters. The FPAC-BC became operational in October 2018 and has undergone some minor structural changes to improve output.

FPAC-BC engaged the National Academy of Public Administration to conduct an independent review of FPAC-BC's organizational structure and work with FPAC leadership to develop an implementation plan to operationalize recommendations and effectively navigate process changes. The study was conducted between September 2022 – August 2023. As a part of this study, the Study Team reviewed existing documentation on the organizational structure of the FPAC-BC and collected additional supporting data with the assistance of FPAC-BC leadership. The Study Team considered the ideas, feedback, and input collected and provided recommendations to FPAC on the most responsive, effective, and efficient organizational structure for FPAC-BC service delivery. The Study Team developed reports and briefings on the implementation plan developed in the previous phase and supported FPAC leadership with necessary change management efforts, including the development of a change management communications plan.

The Academy appointed a three-member Expert Advisory Group (EAG) to oversee and guide this study. The final deliverable with findings and recommendations, and an executive briefing on the report, were completed on August 18, 2023.

Deliverables

I. Literature Review and Data Collection

The Study Team collected, reviewed, and aggregated over 100 documents on FPAC-BC's organizational structure and history.

II. Assessment of Initial Process Change Plan Report

The Study Team reviewed existing input and feedback from across the FPAC Mission Area on proposed process change plans and conducted additional interviews with FPAC Mission Area employees to gain additional perspectives on process change plans. This culminated in a report with findings and recommendations to support and enable the most responsive, effective, and efficient organizational structure for FPAC-BC service delivery.

III. Comprehensive Process Change and Implementation Plan Development and Briefings

The Study Team developed an implementation plan that operationalized recommendations and effectively navigated the change management process.

IV. Summary of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer Facilitation Sessions

The Study Team facilitated work sessions with the leadership of three FPAC-BC Divisions: Financial Management (FMD), Performance, Accountability, and Risk (PAR), and Budget (BUD). Based on the work sessions, the Academy was tasked to develop considerations of organizational alignment for the Office of Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), identify the desired future state of the OCFO, potential barriers, and organizational strategies to achieve the desired organizational and functional structures for FPAC's new OCFO, and to assist with the change management efforts.

Expert Advisory Group

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